

What is understanding?

You only understand it, we say, if you can teach it, use it, prove it, explain it, defend it or read between the lines and so on - Wiggins and McTighe, Understanding by Design

The 6 Facets of understanding

Wiggins and Mc Tighe have proposed 6 facets of understanding. When we truly

Can explain – provide thorough, supported, justified accounts of facts, data and phenomena.

Can interpret – tell meaningful stories, offer translations, provide a meaningful personal opinion, use images, anecdotes, analogies and models to explain ideas or events.

Have perspective – see and hear points of view through other people's eyes or ears, see the big picture.

Can empathise – find value in what others might find odd, be sensitive on the basis of prior experiences.

Have self-knowledge – be aware of what we do not understand, why understanding is hard and perceive personal habits that slow down our own understanding.